revised on 14-10-2004 and therefore any upward revision as per the provisions of the MMDR Act cannot be done before 14-10-2007.

(b) and (c) State Governments are the owner of the minerals and grant mining lease. Prior approval of the Central Government is required only in cases of minerals mentioned in the First Schedule of the MMDR Act, 1957.

(d) Based on the recommendations of the High Level Committee, the new Mineral Policy is under consideration of the Government.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Installation of weather forecast stations

1. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to install 200 automatic weather forecast stations in the Eastern India;

(b) if so, the details thereof *inter-alia* indicating those that are proposed to be installed in Orissa; and

(c) whether the action plan will provide comprehensive for casting on frequent intervals to the coastal people to control large-scale destruction in this region?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) As a part of initial limited modernization programme of IMD for up gradation of Observational System, IMD has proposed to install-500 Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) all over India. Exact locations are yet to be finalized. Further, as a part of ongoing schemes of the Department, 125 AWS have been procured recently and the same are under installation at various field stations. Out of these 28 AWS are being installed in Eastern and North-Eastern States of India. These include 8 over Orissa namely Mimpara, Rambha, Brahmagiri, Chandipur, Basudevpur, Bongaigarh, Bhubaneshwar and Nawapada.

(c) Yes, Sir. Installation of AWS will strengthen the observational

network. Data from AWS are received at hourly interval which will provide better inputs for initialization of high resolution numerical weather prediction models. This, in turn, will improve the weather forecast capability and help in better preparedness for the high impact weather events.

Power generation from sea water

†2. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey for generating power from sea water:

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any cost analysis has been made in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof,

(e)whether Government are contemplating to implement any project for commercial power generation from marine water;

(f) if so, the name of the organization proposed to be associated with the project of commercial power generation; and

(g) the financial assistance being provided by Government for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (e) Ministry of Earth Sciences have estimated the potential of generation of power from sea water through renewable sources of energy on the basis of available data on wave height, water depth, thermal gradient etc. in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India. At present, generating electricity from seawater using Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) and Wave Energy is not found to be cost effective at commercial scale due to high capital cost, low level of power generation from each plant and high cost of transfer of power to the coast as plants have to be located far away from the Coast. Government of India is not implementing any project for commercial power generation.

(f) and (g) Does not arise.

†Originai notice of the question was received in Hindi.